

Message Text

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44

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

COME-00 EB-07 LAB-04 SIL-01 SAM-01 HEW-02 OPR-02 /085 W

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R 120938Z JUL 75

FM AMEMBASSY MADRID

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2414

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LISBON

USEC BRUSSELS 1716

USMISSION GENEVA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, SP

SUBJ: LABOR WRAP-UP

REF : (A) MADRID 4280; (B) MADRID 3284; (C) MADRID 4632

SUMMARY: RECENT LABOR DEVELOPMENTS HAVE INCLUDED: (A) PLANT LEVEL ELECTIONS OF GOVT CONTROLLED SPANISH SYNDICAL ORGANIZATION (SSO); (B) AN SSO-SPONSORED DECREE RE WORKERS' RIGHT TO ASSEMBLE IN THE PLANT; (C) LACK OF ENTHUSIASM FOR RECENT DECREE-LAW GRANTING MODIFIED RIGHT TO STRIKE; (D) STRIKE ACTIVITY, INCLUDING UNSUCCESSFUL JUNE 4 MADRID GENERAL STRIKE ATTEMPT AND JUNE 11 BASQUE ATTEMPT; AND (E) WORKER TRIALS IN VALLODOLID, OVIEDO, AND MADRID. END SUMMARY.

1. JUNE QUADRENNIAL SSO FACTORY LEVEL ELECTIONS (REF A) WERE SIGNIFICANT BECAUSE OF HIGH (85 PERCENT) PARTICIPA-
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TION AND LARGE NUMBER OF MEMBERS OF CLANDDESTINE LABOR

GROUPS ELECTED SHOP STEWARDS (SEPTTEL).

2. NEW DECREE ON WORKERS' RIGHT TO ASSEMBLE LIBERALIZES KEY FEATURES OF A 1971 DECREE ON SAME SUBJECT, ALTHOUGH IT STILL REQUIRES SSO'S PERMISSION IN ADVANCE FOR WORKERS TO MEET. IT ALSO ALLOWS MEETINGS OF WORKERS ON FACTORY PREMISES FOR SPECIFIC WORK-RELATED REASONS (1971 DECREE PERMITTED PREVIOUSLY APPROVED WORKER MEETINGS IN SSO PREMISES BUT NOT NORMALLY IN FACTORIES THEMSELVES). ALTHOUGH NEW DECREE REPRESENTS STEP FORWARD, IT IS BEING CRITICIZED AS TOO-LITTLE AND TOO-LATE. SPONTANEOUS AND ILLEGAL WORKER ASSEMBLIES IN FACTORIES HAVE BECOME AN INCREASINGLY COMMON FEATURE OF SPANISH LABOR SCENE, AND WORKERS ARE EXPECTED TO CONTINUE HOLDING SPONTANEOUS FACTORY ASSEMBLIES WITHOUT SEEKING SSO'S PERMISSION.

3. RECENT DECREE-LAW GRANTING A MODIFIED RIGHT TO STRIKE FOR FIRST TIME IN FRANCO SPAIN (REF B) HAD FAILED AROUSE MUCH ENTHUSIASM. THERE HAS NOT YET BEEN A SINGLE INSTANCE OF A LEGAL STRIKE UNDER ITS TERMS, THUS CONFIRMING GENERAL VIEW THAT 18-DAY NOTIFICATION PERIOD FOR LEGAL STRIKE AND PROHIBITIONS ON A WIDE VARIETY OF STRIKES MAKE DECREE-LAW RELATIVELY MEANINGLESS. SO HOSTILE HAS BEEN WORKER REACTION TO DECREE-LAW THAT EVEN SSO RECENTLY FELT CONSTRAINED TO CRITICIZE IT AS GROSSLY INADEQUATE. SSO CRITICISM STUNG PRINCIPAL AUTHOR OF DECREE-LAW, I.E., NEW LABOR MINISTER FERNANDO SUAREZ, WHO THEN PUBLICLY POINTED OUT THAT SSO HAD FULLY APPROVED TEXT OF DECREE-LAW AND HAD HAD AMPLE OPPORTUNITIES TO SUGGEST CHANGES IN TEXT BEFORE IT WAS PROMULGATED BUT FAILED TO DO SO.

4. STRIKE ACTIVITY INVOLVED TWO SO-CALLED "DAYS OF STRUGGLE" WITH POLITICALLY-MOTIVATED GENERAL STRIKE ATTEMPTS, ONE IN MADRID JUNE 4 AND OTHER IN BASQUE PROVINCES JUNE 11. BOTH WERE SPONSORED PRINCIPALLY BY SPANISH COMMUNIST PARTY (PCE) AND WORKERS COMMISSIONS, BUT BOTH WERE RELATIVE FAILURES. THERE WERE ALSO SCATTERED STRIKES IN MADRID METALLURGICAL FACTORIES IN JUNE DUE TO FACT PROVINCIAL METALWORKERS CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS HAVE BOGGED DOWN; BRIEF STRIKE AMONG CONSTRUCTION WORKERS AT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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600 MILLION DOLLAR FORD PLANT CONSTRUCTION SITE OUTSIDE VALENCIA; AND CONTINUING STRIKE OF HOSPITAL INTERNS THROUGHOUT SPAIN'S SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM INVOLVING A COMPLEX OF ISSUES RELATING TO WORKER REPRESENTATIVITY, PROFESSIONAL STATUS, AND TRAINING, THIS STRIKE REACHED A POINT WHERE GOVT FIRED 1,800 INTERNS. SOME 40 HOSPITALS HAVE BEEN AFFECTED BY DRASTICALLY CURTAILED SERVICES DUE TO STRIKE.

5. LABOR SCENE HAS ALSO BEEN MAREKED BY APPARENT SPEED-UP IN PENDING LABOR TRIALS BEFORE SUMMER HOLIDAYS. THUS PAST MONTH HAS WITNESSED: (A) TRIAL BEFORE VALLADOLID LABOR COURT OF 27 WORKERS FIRED BY RENAULT COMPANY FOR LEADING PROLONGED STRIKE LAST FALL; (B) TRIAL BEFORE OVIEDO LABOR COURT OF 100 TEMPORARY WORKERS LAID OFF BY TWO ASTURIAN METALLURGICAL FIRMS; AND (C) JULY 1-3 TRIAL BEFORE MADRID'S PUBLIC ORDER COURT (REF C) OF 23 WORKERS INVOLVED IN FAMOUS MARCH 1972 NEAR-GENERAL STRIKE IN EL FERROL IN WHICH TWO WORKERS WERE KILLED. MOST ACTIVE IN DEFENSE OF WORKERS AT THESE TRIALS HAVE BEEN CLANDESTINE SOCIALIST PSOE/UGT AS WELL AS PCE. PRINCIPAL DEFENSE LAWYER AT BOTH VALLADOLID AND OVIEDO TRIALS WAS SEVILLE SOCIALIST PSOE/UGT LAWYER AND LEADER FELIPE GANZALES, WHO WON BOTH CASES. EL FERROL TRIAL WAS NOTEWORTHY FOR ROLE OF SEVERAL PCE DEFENSE LAWYERS, ALTHOUGH VERDICT AND SENTENCES HAVE NOT YET BEEN ISSUED.

6. IMMEDIATE FUTURE PROSPECT IS FOR LABOR ACTIVITY TO END MID-JULY AS WORKERS GO ON SUMMER HOLIDAYS, ALGHOUGH SUMMER MAY BE FOLLOWED BY WHAT BOTH GOVT AND LABOR OPPOSITION SOURCES PREDICT WILL BE WORST "HOT AUTUMN" IN SPANISH LABOR SECTOR YET, WITH NEWLY ELECTED SSO SHOP STEWARDS DEMONSTRATING THEIR MILITANCE. ALL WILL ALSO WITNESS LOCAL, PROVINCIAL, AND NATIONAL PHASES OF SSO ELECTIONS.

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